



# Benton County Genealogical Society

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FEBRUARY 2026

## “Mini-News”

Our goal is to provide a regular newsletter every other month, with a mini-newsletter in between. The main purpose of the mini-newsletter is to share events that might be outdated by the time the next regular newsletter is released.



## February Program



### “A Trip to Discover my Polish Roots”

**Presented by Jim Birken**

*“With the help of a Polish organization that does ancestry research, and an excellent tour service in Krakow, I journeyed to the town my grandmother left in 1888.”*

Jim grew up in Los Angeles, and moved to Corvallis in 1980. He has worked at Oregon State, Western Oregon, and Linn Benton. He began his career in administration with an emphasis on accounting, and ended in the area of Planned Giving. Since his retirement, his focus has been on travel. He has visited many countries with plans to visit more.

### February 14th

**10:30 – 11:00: Society Meeting ..... 11:00 am – Noon: Program**

Meetings and Programs are held on the second floor at the  
Philomath Museum, 1101 Main St.

A wheelchair ramp is located at the northeast corner of the building.

Please do not bring food or drinks into the museum.

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# RootsTech 2026

RootsTech is an annual genealogy and family history conference organized by FamilySearch International. This year's event will be held in Salt Lake City, Utah, on March 5-7. (There are also some events offered on March 4th and 8th.) There are fees to attend in person, but you can register for the **online** keynotes and sessions for **free**.

There are sessions available for Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced genealogists. Once you register, you can select the sessions you would like to join. Many of the online sessions will also be recorded for later viewing.

The registration for FREE online sessions is here:

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/registration/online/>

Information and registration for attending in person can be found here:

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/registration/in-person>



## What's Coming for FamilySearch in 2026

- **Expanded global record access.** Increased access to records for many countries, including Belgium, Cameroon, Malawi, South Korea, and Uruguay.
- **AI-Driven Search and Discovery.**
  - Full-Text Search: AI will be trained to read old handwriting in more languages, allowing users to find ancestors in digitized documents by name.
  - Interactive Chatbot will help users find answers quickly by scanning the FamilySearch wiki, blog, and help center.
  - Hint Filtering will prioritize "hints" that are most likely to extend branches of your family tree.
- **Improved Tree Integrity** through quality alerts and smarter merging tools.

BCGSOR@GMAIL.COM	<h2>March Sneak Peek</h2> <p>Our March program will center around a very influential Benton County family: Victor and Vina Moses</p>
<a href="http://BCGS-OREGON.ORG">BCGS-OREGON.ORG</a>	
Benton County Genealogical Society PO Box 35 Philomath, OR 97370	